

Commenting Guide

We invite you to participate in reviewing the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Mount Rogers NRA Ewing Mountain Vegetation Project and provide your comments during this important phase of the process. Comments must be submitted no later than May 28, 2021. The Environmental Assessment and supporting documentation, including project maps, are available on the project website at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=44665>

First, there are a few important points you need to know about how we respond to comments and how we can both get the most out of your review of these documents. If you are going to take time to comment, you want it to count.

Specific comments on how to improve the project, what you prefer in another alternative, or important things you think we missed in the proposed action, are very helpful. We can better respond to your comments if you are as specific as possible and if you cite the location(s) in the document of the section to which you are directing your comments. If you reference other documents in your comments, please attach complete copies, or links to them. If complete copies are not available, please provide the cover page and applicable pages from them.

Substantive comments provide factual information, professional opinion, or informed judgment that is relevant to the action being proposed. Substantive comments are specific, comparative, or solution oriented. A substantive comment provides the reasons why and goes beyond just expressing an opinion. Comments such as, “The proposed action looks good” is not substantive. We want to know *why* the proposed action looks good.

Comments may:

- Identify issues (cause and effect relationship between proposed action and effects);
- Suggest alternative ways to conduct the action, or lessen the impacts of the action through mitigation or project design feature;
- Suggest a method to measure effects; and/or,
- Provide new information for the interdisciplinary team to consider.

Not all comments are relevant to the decision; comments are not relevant (non-substantive) if they are:

- Beyond the scope of the proposal;
- Unrelated to the decision being made;
- Already decided by law, regulation or policy;
- Conjectural in nature or not supported by scientific evidence; or,
- General in nature (not specific to this project) or position statements not supported by reasons.

This is not a voting process. Comments are considered based on content, not quantity. While all comments will be considered, we find substantive comments related to the alternatives the most useful.

We encourage you to submit comments through the project comment portal here:

<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=44665>

Please note that comments received, including your name, address, email address, and telephone number (if provided), are considered part of the public record, and will be available for public inspection.

For more information:

If you have questions about this proposal please contact Chris Shaw, Project Leader, (christopher.e.shaw@usda.gov) or Barry Garten, Area Ranger (barry.garten@usda.gov) at the Mount Rogers NRA Office at (276) 783-5196. Thank you for your interest in the management of your National Forests.